



# Rotary International District 7780

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**Mar 12, 2009**

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## District Governor's Message



Dear Fellow Rotarians,

I want to thank all of you who were able to join us at the World Understanding & Peace dinner on February 28<sup>th</sup>. We had some wonderful fellowship and the opportunity to listen to Ryan McDonnell, an ambassadorial scholar share his inspiring story about his efforts in creating awareness for the many AIDS orphans in Africa. Thanks to all of you for sharing your international projects, your passion and photos in the "Making Dreams Real" video – your dedication and commitment is indeed changing the lives of so many around the world.

Spring is definitely in the air when you realize that DGE Jeff Pelkey will be at NE Multi-District P.E.T.S. from March 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> with all of his president-elects and assistant governors at a comprehensive Rotary leadership training preparing them for the 2009-2010 Rotary year. The district assembly is just around the corner, once again at the York County Community College in Wells, Maine on Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – I hope to see many of you join DGE Jeff as he shares his vision with all of us in the district, as well as the message and theme of incoming RI President John Kenny.

Finally, I want to personally invite all of you and your families to the Samoset Resort on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> to our end of year district conference. Please join us and celebrate all of your accomplishments and hard work throughout this Rotary year. We're mixing it up and changing the format in making it more memorable, more informative and more fun! We have planned a 2 ½ day event showcasing Youth Exchange, our inbound and outbound GSE teams, finalists of the district 4-way test speaking contest, "Making Dreams Real" through our foundation dollars both locally and around the world, panel discussions and breakout sessions, too. The conference will feature our "House of Friendship" where attendees can congregate to share fellowship, bid on a variety of great silent auction items, enjoy the club and district displays, participate in the wrap-a-smile coloring station and so much more all in one room while relaxing with a beverage and snack throughout the conference. Enjoy the outdoor zero entry pool, the endless amount of outdoor family activities and shopping opportunities, as well as a golf and tennis tournament being planned for Saturday afternoon. It all starts June 5<sup>th</sup>, Friday morning at the Samoset resort. For more information, visit our district website at [www.rotary7780.org](http://www.rotary7780.org) and click on the District Conference tab.

Best Rotary regards,

DG Brad Jett

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[Message from the chair -- Literacy is the key to success](#)

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**Dear family of Rotary,**

Knowing how to read and write can transform a person's life. These basic skills, which so many of us take for granted, can mean a job, an income, and hope for a better future for those who are struggling to break the cycle of poverty. That's why Rotary has focused on promoting literacy for more than two decades, and why The Rotary Foundation has provided millions of dollars to support literacy projects.

March is Literacy Month on the Rotary calendar, a time to consider what your club could be doing to boost literacy rates in your community and in communities around the globe. In parts of our world, less than 30 percent of the population can read and write. Many of those people are women and girls who have few opportunities for education and who then cannot teach their own children to read. Even in wealthy countries, you'll find substandard schools that are failing to adequately teach basic skills and far too many adults who cannot read or write well enough to function effectively in society.

Our Foundation's Humanitarian Grants Program is at work throughout the world helping many disparate groups gain life-changing literacy skills. Foundation grants are providing books, school supplies, computers, and other educational equipment. With Foundation support, clubs are adopting failing schools and helping them to thrive and developing programs using the concentrated language encounter method that has proven so effective in Thailand and many other countries.

Literacy opens doors to employment and economic security. Let's use our Foundation resources to provide that essential key.

Jonathan Majiyagbe

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**March is Literacy Month**  
**Why Rotarians Should be involved in Literacy**

Rotary International has identified March as a specific time for Rotarians to create awareness of the need for literacy projects. Of course, we say, of course reading and writing is important. But how many of us really stop to think beyond the skills of reading and writing, skills that many of us take for granted in our every day lives? Permit me to share two stories about what literacy skills mean in the long term outlook on life.

When I was in Guatemala last month, I met two young women who have beaten the odds and completed an eighth grade education. In a country where most indigenous women have only a second grade education, getting through eighth grade is quite an accomplishment. Both of these young women are currently enrolled in diveriscado, the high school equivalent where students learn basic professional skills. It is through the support and commitment of their parents, the sacrifice of their parents along with the financial support of Rotarian mentors providing scholarships that both young women have come so far. But let me share the differences between these girls as a result of their access to quality literacy opportunities.

Maria is the oldest of four children. Her mom died several years ago, no one knows why. She woke up one morning with a severe headache. Going to a doctor was not an option; after all, it was just a headache. A few weeks later, Maria's mom was dead. Maria's dad is a mason. He has only a second grade education himself, but vowed that his kids would have better opportunities than he. Fortunately, a traveler to Guatemala met Maria, recognized her potential and helped her – and her brothers and little sister – with scholarships to stay in school. When Maria was in the eighth grade she struggled with math, struggled to the point of failing that class. In Guatemala, if you fail one class you fail the

entire year. So Maria, with much encouragement from her sponsor, repeated the school year. Again, she was in danger of failing math. Her dream of going on to the next level and learning to work in the tourism industry was evaporating before her eyes. But she was ready to just give up when she was told by the school that she, again, would not pass.

Cindy is another young woman just completing the eighth grade. Cindy's mom takes care of her younger brothers and sisters and her dad works as a welder. Cindy attended a school where there were textbooks and had access to a computer lab with a quality, project-based curriculum. Part of Cindy's education involved working with other students to develop a product or service project in her community as an extension of the skills she was learning in technology. Cindy and her student partners developed a small company that does specialized embroidery on t-shirts and jackets. But the kids didn't just do their "homework," they organized a small company and began selling the t-shirts to their friends and to tourists. Currently, they are researching a micro-credit loan to try to purchase an embroidery machine so they don't have to rent time on a machine to turn out their product.

So what is the difference between these two girls and what is the connection to literacy? In both cases, the girls completed the eighth grade and both girls have learned basic reading, writing, and math. But in Guatemala, education is essentially "copy off the board" and "repeat after the teacher." There is very little opportunity for critical thinking, evaluation, or problem-solving. In Maria's case, she had learned her lessons well; she does what she's told and follows directions. She had dreams, but those dreams were easily sidelined when the answer was "no." Though a bright young woman, Maria was about to give up rather than figuring out how to accomplish what she had set out to do. She had learned to "copy off the board" but hadn't learned to think on her own. Cindy's outlook is much different. Because she had access to books and a curriculum that develops thinking skills, she and her friends didn't just do their assignment, they figured out how to make a go at a business. They aren't merely copying off the board, they are thinkers and doers and problem-solvers.

This brings me back to my original point about literacy. As Rotarians, we are charged with seeking opportunities to support students, both at home and in far away places, in their acquisition of strong literacy skills. Our role in promoting literacy is to promote the ability to think and reason – to use both written and spoken language to communicate effectively. Whether we are reading to children in the local first grade classroom and posing questions about the story, or giving dictionaries to our third graders and encouraging them to look up new words, or finding the means to bring books to a third world country and helping to train teachers in how to effectively use those books as teaching tools, Rotarians have an awesome responsibility to effect positive outcomes by promoting and supporting literacy endeavors.

The endings to my stories are both positive. Maria passed her math exams (thanks to strong mentoring and tutoring) and is now attending school to learn to work in the tourism industry. As a result of involved and engaged mentors, she is learning that closed doors don't necessarily mean dead ends – there are always open windows to try. Cindy is learning to manage her business and is still looking for a sponsor to help her with a micro-credit loan. No doubt she'll find it!

How can you make a difference in the life of the next young person? We can't all go to Guatemala or Nigeria, but we can all support projects that promote literacy. We can all share a story that we've experienced first hand or that we've heard from a Rotarian friend about how these projects (and support of our

Foundation) make such a difference. And we can all visit a first grade class and read a story. You'll never know which child will start dreaming about possibilities because we shared the power of the written word.

Share Literacy – and Make Dreams Real  
 Carolyn Johnson  
 District 7780 Literacy Resource Coordinator

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### **World Understanding and Peace Dinner**

PDG Peter Johnson hosted the evening. District Governor Brad surprised Penny with a Paul Harris Fellow for all she's done and is doing for the District. Two of our Rotary Youth Exchange students joined us for the evening. Our Guest speaker, Ambassadorial Scholar Ryan McDonnell told us of the inspiring 1300 mile walk through South Africa raising awareness for the plight orphans of AIDS victims. As noted below, Carolyn

Johnson was surprised by the Award of Rotariy's highest award, the "Service Above Self". To top it off DG Brad presented a wonderful program showcasing all that the District Clubs are doing for International Understanding and Peace.



DGE Jeff Pelky chats with newly announced future DGN Gary Speers



PDG and District Foundation Chair Peter Johnson was Master of Ceremonies



Ambassadorial Scholar Ryan McDonnell was our keynote speaker



DG Brad successfully surprised Penny with a Paul Harris Fellow

District Governor Brad greeting the attendees



PDG Liz Cullen presented awards for the top three Clubs for per capita giving to the Annual Fund for 2007-2008. The Rotary Club of South Portland-Cape Elizabeth led the District. The Rotary Club of Kittery was second, and the Rotary Club of Newburyport was third.

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**Carolyn Johnson Wins Coveted "Service Above Self" Award**



Carolyn Johnson was completely taken by surprise when District Governor Brad Jett announced that she had won Rotary's highest honor, the *Service Above Self Award*, at the World Understanding and Peace Dinner. Carolyn was nominated for the work she is doing to change the culture of reading and improve literacy in Guatemala.

For the past several years, Carolyn has been working closely with Cooperative for Education, a non-profit organization that provides textbooks and computer labs to Guatemalan schools in rural and impoverished areas. Carolyn has developed a methodology to train elementary school teachers to teach better reading skills to their young students -- many of whom speak indigenous tongues at home and learn Spanish only when they enter school. Carolyn is currently spending about one-half her time in Guatemala, both training the teachers and in follow-up assessments of their skills as well as measuring the improvements in their students.

The *Service Above Self* award is Rotary's highest honor for individual Rotarians, recognizing those who have displayed exemplary humanitarian service with a focus on active involvement in helping others through Rotary. Each year, current and immediate past district governors and current and past RI directors may submit nominations for this award. After all nominations are reviewed, the RI Board selects a maximum of 150 Rotarians per annum to receive the award.

Previously, **DGN Ann Lee Hussey** won this prestigious award.



CORP Training: Carolyn Johnson has developed a training methodology to help Guatemalan teachers teach reading to primary school kids.



Sacatapequez: Carolyn Johnson is using the vocational skills she developed from her career as a primary school teacher and principal to improve the lives of indigenous people in Guatemala.

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **Presidential Membership Conference**

March 27-28, 2009  
Baltimore, MD

<http://rotary7780.clubwizard.com/IMUpload/MembeshipBaltimore%20Reg.doc>

### **District Assembly**

Tuesday, April 21, 2009  
YCCC, Wells, ME

### **District Conference**

June 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Samoset Resort  
Rockport, ME

<http://rotary7780.clubwizard.com/IMUpload/ACF6635.doc>

### **International Convention**

June 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Birmingham, England

<http://www.rotary.org/en/Members/Events/Convention/Pages/ridefault.aspx?housead>

### **District Changeover Dinner**

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Holiday Inn By the Bay  
Portland, ME

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## District Clubs "Make Dreams Real" Through Matching Grants

District 7780 clubs truly are using the Rotary Foundation matching grant program to "make dreams real" in developing nations around the world. This year, nine clubs in our District together pledged a total of \$33,815 toward six matching grants to provide clean water, transportation, sanitation facilities, sustainable agriculture, and much, much more in countries as far-flung as Ghana, the Dominican Republic, and Poland. Another seven District clubs pledged \$13,815 more toward four additional matching grants that will be ready to be processed as soon as the Rotary Foundation starts accepting applications again next fiscal year.

Taken altogether, these clubs monies, combined with District matching funds and Rotary Foundation matching dollars, mean that, thanks to clubs in our District, over \$ **382,000** in humanitarian services is, or will soon be, going to help our international neighbors who need it most.

Another way to look at it: For a cash investment of just under \$47,000, District clubs were able to multiply their investment by **seven times!** Talk about beating the S&P!

So how does the Rotary matching grant magic work? The money that Rotarians in this District give to The Rotary Foundation is invested and available for us in future years to use in the programs of our choice. In other words: The magic only works through the generosity of our District Rotarians.

Clubs who successfully applied (or who are ready to apply) for matching grants this fiscal year are:

Bath Sunrise   Boothbay Harbor   Bridgton Lake Region   Brunswick Coastal  
Casco Bay Sunrise   Dover   Durham-Great Bay   Exeter   Newburyport  
Ogunquit   Portland   Portsmouth   Sanford-Springvale   Topsham Expresso

Wells York

Congratulations to all these clubs!

*Marty Peak Helman*  
Grants Coordinator



There's so much need worldwide, and Rotary Foundation matching grants can provide help in the form of literacy, health, clean water, nutrition, and other humanitarian programs. photo by Glenn Chamberlain

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### Club News

On Feb. 25th at The Kennebec Tavern in Bath, **The Rotary Club of Bath** had it's first RPM (Rotary After-hours) . The turn out was great. We hope to do this on a monthly basis.



Jayne Palmer, Mike Baribeau, & Lee Patenaude sample some great appetizers.



President Annie Merry & Art Mayo talk with future Rotarians Cathy Crouch & Liz Wyman





A Teachers Break. Mark Merry of Morse High & Tony Trippi of Bath Regional Vocational Center. Our Rotary club funds Tony's Building & Construction program where the students build a home every year.

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### **Boothbay Harbor and Bath Sunrise Help Plant a Garden at Safe Passage**

A Matching Grant that started last year to build a sports field and garden at Safe Passage, the literacy program in Guatemala, reached a milestone last month when the garden was inaugurated.



Completed Garden: The completed garden has special plots that allow the kids to touch, smell, and "hear" Mother Nature at work, as well as a stage for small performances.

Barbara cuts: Everyone gets in the act when the ribbon is cut at the inauguration.



Members of Host Club Guatemala Metropoli celebrate along with Boothbay Harbor Rotarians Marty and Frank Helman.



The Rotary Clubs of **Breakwater Daybreak** and **South Portland – Cape Elizabeth** had a blind wine tasting of same grapes from different areas.

Fourteen members and friends of the Rotary Clubs of Breakwater Daybreak and South Portland – Cape

Elizabeth had a blind wine tasting led by Browne Trading Company’s Chef Jennifer Flock at the home of Ilse Yanis and Jim Price. Jen was one of ten applicants out of forty who passed the Certified Sommelier examination in New York last October. She continues studying for her Master Sommelier Diploma examination and is writing a book about wine.

The Court of Master Sommeliers has only recognized 167 people in the world at this level of expertise. Jen explained to the Rotarians how to use their sense of smell and taste to identify the variety and country of origin of a wine. The senior Rotarian Thurston Holt shared a quote he recalled by a British actor in a 1930’s film, “Death is a vintage to be savored.” Thurston will be 90 years old on August 14. The other Rotarians hope that we can be as agile and alert as Thurston if we get to his age.

Jen Flock



On April 18, the **Bridgton-Lake Region Rotary Club** will hold a Dance at The Ballroom in Harrison. Tickets are \$10. This should be a very affordable evening of fun for all.



The very active Interact Club at Lake Region High School put together gift baskets for our community. (Photo Credit: The Bridgton News)

The Bridgton-Lake Region Rotary Club, in collaboration with The Lions Club and Hayes True Value Hardware Store, purchased 160 smoke detectors for distribution to those in the towns of Bridgton, Denmark, Naples, Harrison and Sweden to provide homes with this very important device.

Families in need can contact the local Fire Department to receive these free. Photo shows these organizations receiving the smoke detectors.



**Brunswick Coastal and Kennebunk Rotary Clubs**

“Local Schoolchildren Hard at Play” *The Gift of*

*Water Sets a Powerful Example – Article and Photos by Sebastian Dennen*

With the scarcity of resources and funding that dominates the quality of life rural South Africa, innovation and humanitarianism are a rare source of hope for a better future. They are also mutually inclusive: one cannot succeed without the other. On a recent journey into the outskirts of Greytown, SA, I was able to witness an inspiring product of these two forces in action. For the young learners at Lootshoek Primary School near Greytown, potable water is flowing freely – for the first time – in an isolated area hundreds of meters from the nearest source. It began with a simple question: by what means can these children, most of whom walk more than three kilometers every day to attend their classes, gain sustainable access to drinking water in an area devoid of plumbing, where only the heartiest of vehicles can go? The answer captures the possibility of true innovation, the kind of thinking that underscores the necessity of using any and all means available.



The logistics of the Playpump are simple: a bore-hole connected to a water source deep underground is tapped by a rotary pump-and-filtration



system, which in turn feeds into a water storage tank and a gravity tap. And it is powered by the learners themselves, laughing as they whirl on their new merry-go-round – the only piece of playground equipment at the school. I watched with amazement as the children mounted their new toy en masse, and after only a handful of revolutions, clean drinkable water splashed from the tap. In my home country few go without running water, but the effect of this incredible system was not lost on me. The entire spectacle played out within sight of the tepid pond, hundreds of meters away, where these children used to have to struggle up the barren hill every single day carrying buckets of water. Now, the children have the opportunity to do what children do best: to smile and laugh, light-hearted and carefree, near-bursting with a simple kind of joy that I believe to be a rarity in such a troubled region. Thanks to the commitment of just a few individuals, water is no longer the direct result of back-breaking labor – it is a by-product of the boundless energy of children at play



The **Rotary Club of Damariscotta-Newcastle** hosted the Second Annual Karl's Kids Event, a family fun Ski Race and Silent Auction at Sugarloaf honoring our dearly departed Rotarian Karl Berger's passion for supporting children's athletics in Lincoln County. By becoming a sponsored Skier or contributing or bidding on Silent Auction items including Red Sox tickets and a Sugarloaf Ski weekend, the public helps the club to raise funds for athletic equipment for young people in need throughout Lincoln County Maine. Nearly fifty racers participated in the two day event and it was a very close call as to who had more fun, the participants or the dedicated Rotarians putting on the event.



Damariscotta-Newcastle Rotarian and Karl's Kids organizer Mike Hall #7 and daughter Emma # 12 prepare to hit the slopes with other ski racers.

The **Rotary Club of Exeter**



The Exeter Club inducted another two new members recently. Shown L-R, new member Joe O'Brien, PRID Art Richardson, PP Allison Field, new member, Ryan Lawrence, President Mae Bradshaw.



The Exeter Club celebrated RI's 104th birthday with a cake. Shown are President Elect Jim McAllister, Club President Mae Bradshaw.

This past month brought two annual events and a new event to the **Hampton Rotary Club**. On Valentines Day, 2/14/09, the Winnacunnet High School Interact Club hosted 105 senior citizens for their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Sweetheart Brunch. The "Sweethearts" were treated to a menu of Quiches, Sandwiches, Veggies, and Home Baked Sweets. Entertainment included shows by the Winnacunnet Chamber Singers, local Irish dancers, student solo instrumentals, a trivia contest, a raffle, and some dancing.

Our club also held a Child Car Seat Safety Seminar which was open to the public. Two members of our local fire department, Steve Benotti – a club member- and Jeff LeDuc showed attendees what to look for in a quality car seat and how to adjust and fit a child safety seat properly. Car accidents account for 60% of child fatalities in this country. This seminar was held to promote this year's Rotary theme of "Make Dreams Real" to the public.

Lastly, 19 of our 66 members attended the World Peace and Understanding dinner. This was an excellent Rotary evening and provided our members with an excellent opportunity for fellowship. We look forward to March!!





Members of the Winnacunnet High School Interact Club treat local seniors to a great day of fun.



The public learns about child mortality at a public seminar on Child Car Seat Safety sponsored by the Rotary Club of Hampton.



Many members of the Rotary Club of Hampton attend this year's WUPD.

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**Kennebunk Rotary Club**



Pictured above is Elaine Brady, President of The Kennebunk Rotary Club presenting Dr. Joseph Iriana with a check for \$500.00. Dr. Iriana, a former Rotarian who continues in "Service above Self", has provided free dental care to children throughout the poorest areas in the world. He just completed a mission in Cristo Salva, Honduras. He is scheduled to go to the Philippines in April to run dental and medical clinics in three remote areas. He is in need of **portable** dental equipment in order to reach all the villages, especially Clavaria (up in the hills) and an orphanage in Mati with 300 children. He hopes upon his return to reach out to rural areas in Maine as well. Anyone wishing to join with the Kennebunk Rotary Club in supporting this much needed cause could send contributions to: HealthEquip Corp – (a 501C-3 company) at 5 Roaring Brook Road, Arundel, ME 04046.

**Kennebunk Portside Rotary – SMMC (Southern Maine Medical Center) –**

Portside Rotary was enlightened by two speakers from SMMC, (1) Merle Westbrook, SMMC Primecare, who spoke on the disease of Diabetes and (2) Debra Brown, SMMC, who spoke on heart disease. Both speakers have a wealth of knowledge on their topic and shared their information with the club. We all walked away with helpful, important information on how we can make some simple adjustments in our lifestyles to be more fit and healthy.



Merle Westbrook – SMMC  
Diabetes



Debra Brown speaking on heart disease



Rick thanking Debra



Kennebunk Portside Rotary – Raffle Winner – Polio Plus – Portside Rotary offers a weekly 50/50 raffle with a jackpot that had accumulated to \$1,165.00. Karen Schlegel, picked the joker and was the lucky winner of the jackpot. The club shared in the joy and in keeping in spirit of Rotary, Karen donated \$100 back to Polio Plus. A fun and joyous moment for Karen and the Club. Jackpot starts over again.

### The Rotary Club of Ogunquit



Bringing cupcakes, preparing and serving soup, sandwiches and other food, were among the activities in which these Rotarians, President Elect Lisa Greenlaw (with cupcakes) and Treasurer Eleanor Vadenais (serving soup) along with other club members, took part in for Valentine's Day. The event took place at the Wells and Ogunquit Senior Center at Moody. The occasion was the 'Day of Warming,' a public open house sponsored by the Center which invited people to turn down their thermostats at home for a day and spend quality time with others in a warm place with recreation and refreshments. A good-sized crowd responded.

Valentine's Luncheon at Ogunquit Rotary Club's new venue, the Beach House Grill. Members invited their spouses and significant others to attend the annual affair. Married folks had a boasting contest to see who had been married the longest. Contestants claimed anywhere from 34 years to 53 years of togetherness.



Seated, (l to r): Richard Littlefield, Richard Gordon, Mary Haines, Stuart Nudelman, Pres. Elect Lisa Greenlaw, Eleanor Vadenais, Jillian Brown, and Pete Woodbury. Standing are Ralph Minichiello, Pat Minichiello, Suzanne Thompson, Joan Gordon, Susan Heckaman, Bill Zechel,

Norm Wilkinson, Dorothy Wilkinson, Pres. Tracy Smith, Carol Brennan, Kathy Wright, Mary Littlefield, Eva Nudelman, Pat Arnaudin, Frances Reed, Ed Smith and Barbara Woodbury.

Don't be surprised if chess becomes the new popular game of choice among youths in the Port City.

Over the last few weeks the **Portsmouth Rotary Club** has given chess sets to all fourth graders in the city and held a chess day Saturday at the Portsmouth Public Library.

Several youths gathered around giant chessboards and pieces and played the game.



Zach Peete, 12, said he's been playing for a few years and likes the challenge.

"You have to think about each move," he said. "It's just fun."

Nine-year Acadia Spear played a game with her father, Eric, the St. Patrick School's chess club coach.

"It's great for the kids to learn the game at such a young age," Eric Spear said. "The amazing thing is we have kids in second grade playing. If they stick with it, I can only imagine how good they'll be in eighth grade."

The idea to provide the sets was brought about by Rotarian Ted Alex, who's son Jeremy loved the game. Alex's 28-year-old son, who struggled with drug addiction, disappeared in the Maine woods nearly four years ago.

Ever since, Ted Alex and his family have worked to commemorate his son's life by teaching local students about making the right decisions, not only in the game of chess, but also in life.

The chess sets were funded through the Jeremy Alex Fund.

"The kids seem to love the game," Ted Alex said. "It's a fun and healthy sport. It teaches them life skills like taking responsibilities for your actions and that there are consequences to their decisions."



Four young ladies who run the **Interact Club at Portsmouth High School** were the guest speakers at the



Portsmouth Rotary Club. Interact is Rotary International's service club for young people ages 14-18. **Portsmouth Rotary** sponsors an Interact club at the Portsmouth High School and provides support and guidance from Chairpersons Dave Underhill and Marilee Lafond, who are doing an outstanding job as well as their school advisor, Nancy Modern.

Interact meets weekly on Thursdays and has about 35 members, mostly young woman, although they do allow and welcome the guys to join them! They have done some amazing projects this year from collecting food to finding a "common vision for Kenya." That project involves raising money for a community center geared towards helping impoverished women and children who are HIV positive. They collected "coins for causes" and raised \$293.00 for Polio Plus. They correspond with an Interact Club in Malaysia and have enjoyed learning about each other's cultures. At Christmastime, they ran Operation Santa and provided Christmas gifts for a 13 year old girl who would not have received anything otherwise. They also rang bells for the Salvation Army. An ongoing project is volunteering at the Soup Kitchen, which is not only a requirement for all members, but a most rewarding experience – a simple way to make a big difference! They took the plunge at the Polar Bear Swim and raised money for the SPCA. A fun project was on Valentine's Day – they sold orange crush soda cans where kids could write a note on them and send them to someone in school they have a crush on! A great idea that raised \$162. Their endless project list includes a senior citizen prom, car wash, and now helping an injured girl at Winnacunnet High School. May is the last month they meet for the school year and when they elect a new executive board. It was a great presentation by an impressive group of young ladies!

#### **The Rotary Club of Rochester:**



**Spaulding High School Interact Club** Treasurer, Beth Goulet, accepts Presidential Citation from **Rochester Rotary** President Gerry Bisailon. The Interact raised over \$1000 for St Charles Children's Home and organized a Senior Prom for the local elderly.



**Rochester Rotary** Charter member Fred Hall, Jr. receives a Presidential Citation from President Gerry for his initiative in establishing the Dictionary Project for the Club.



On Rotary 104<sup>th</sup> birthday, February 23, 2009, all **Rochester Rotary's** Paul Harris Fellows celebrated the occasion. There are 34 members who are PHF's.

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The **Rotary Club of Sanford-Springvale** forwards the following input from PDG Elias Thomas who is once again on the road for Rotary:

In February 2007, the first group of Rotarians from our district traveled to Chahalka, a Muslim village about seventy-five kilometers south of New Delhi, nobody could have predicted what impact our presence would have on the villagers, as well as on us over the course of our three year project. We were working cooperatively with members of the Rotary Club of Delhi-West. That year our project was funding and constructing two washing platforms at one end of a common area, shared by the grade school at one end and the town's water supply that was covered with a well tile, about sixty feet in diameter. Dozens of the children were getting terribly sick from dysentery, and some were dying. The people of the village did not equate the polluted water with their ailments.



Town Well

At the end of a week of work, we had completed the construction of two washing platforms, which would have spigots for water installed, and which the ladies and girls would use for washing their household laundry and cooking utensils.



Washing Platforms

Fast forward to early 2008 – a group of fifty-four Rotarians and Friends of Rotary gathered at Chahalka to renovate an unused, vacant and derelict government building, adjacent to the site of the washing platforms to transform it into two facilities for the benefit of the village. Because of government regulations in India, when such a project is undertaken like the computer training center, the requirement is also to fund the salary of the instructor for a minimum of three years, along with the salary of the care-giver for the children and the watchman. So prior to traveling we raised funds from individuals and clubs to not only pay for the salaries and renovations, but also to purchase some thirty computers, desks, chairs that would be placed in one end of the building. Then our team served as laborers to renovate the buildings. The concept of THE ROTARY CENTRE FOR COMPUTER TRAINING OF CHAHALKA was not only born, but it became a reality for us and for the town. The other third of the building was transformed into THE ROTARY DAY-CARE CENTRE OF CHAHALKA. Three members of the Rotary Club of Sanford-Springvale joined me and our team included several states in the USA, three provinces from Canada, Ireland, England, Sweden, Australia and France. What an amalgamation of talent and enthusiasm! and truly came to understand the strength and the breadth of Rotary on an international basis.



Center for Computer Training

And return we did... in late January 2009, the first group of our Rotary Dream Team – India 2009 arrived to begin work on a third project – the construction of sanitation enhancement facilities (toilet blocks) for which we had raised funds and obtained a Matching Grant from The Rotary Foundation. The building will contain thirty-five toilets and thirty-five showers, to be used by the women and girl children of the village. Before this addition the women due to modesty and tradition were forced sometimes to walk two kilometers away from the village not only to complete their toilet but also to bathe in privacy.

Over the course of three years a greater level of understanding, respect, honor and yes, even love served to help to someday create a lasting peace among the peoples of the world. The members of the ROTARY DREAM TEAMS – INDIA 2007, 2008 & 2009 have truly impacted this village and Shared Rotary and helped to Make Dreams Real, all the while proving that The Future of Rotary (and yes, Peace) Is In Our Hands

. – Elias Thomas, Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club

To learn more about this project and to view blogs please visit the Sanford-Springvale Rotary website and view the links section to read first-hand accounts of the trips. [www.ssrotary.org](http://www.ssrotary.org)

The **Rotary Club of Sebago Lake** shares t a few scenes from their February Ice Fishing Derby. Besides funding local projects the Derby has also raised funds to support the Rotary Foundation



That's a lot of fish!



Equipment bought by the town of Raymond with funds received from the Fishing Derby

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## District Membership Committee - Thoughts from the Chair

At the President's Midyear dinner DG Brad emphasized the importance of membership to the performance of all the things are clubs do. Rotary International has a Regional Membership Conference at the end of March in Baltimore. Members move on, job changes, moves from the area, health issues, all slowly attrite our existing membership.

If the Club Board of Director's takes their eye off membership for very long they find their club has shrunk and so has their ability to be serve. Expanding the club's membership needs only for each member to continuously invite friends and family members to join them at your Rotary meetings and activities.

If each member invited only 2 guests to an activity during the year, and if only 1 in 10 of those contacts resulted in a new member joining, at the end of the year your club would have 20 percent more members. If you asked someone once, do not hesitate to ask them again, their circumstances may have changed.

As noted in our newsletter again this month, great things are happening because of Rotarians in our District. There is a lot to share, but we need new members to keep up the good work and to help us find new ways that Rotary can make a difference.

Dave Gooch, District Membership Chair 2008-2009

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